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## THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SACRED LITERATURE.

*A report of the work of the Institute for the past year* will appear in the next number of the STUDENT. In the meantime, it will be well to take a look forward over the field which we hope to cover more effectually in the year which is to come. The work has now at least one (in some very many) representatives in every State and Territory in the Union and in every Province in Canada. It counts examiners and students (although comparatively few in number) in Mexico, China, India, Syria, Japan, South Africa, Australia, England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland, South America and the West Indies. A special effort has been made in the past month to acquaint the missionaries in foreign lands with the plan of individual correspondence study of the Bible. Such a means of keeping in touch with the current of thought on Biblical subjects would be a rare boon to many who have been for years separated from civilization and the educating influences which are dear to them. It would seem that the great distance from us of Asiatic and African States would render correspondence study impracticable, but this is not the case. It is possible to keep the student supplied with studies ahead in sufficient number to keep him always with material for work. The criticisms upon his past lessons cannot of course reach him in time to be of avail in the work immediately following. But the method is so simple that there is little or no danger of his falling into error.

*The Correspondence Courses offered for the coming year* are, in the language department, the usual four in Hebrew, two in New Testament Greek, one in Aramaic and one in Arabic. In the English Bible five courses are offered as follows:—The Life of Christ based on the Gospel of Luke, the Gospel of John, the Life of Christ based on the four gospels, Old Testament History from Samuel to Solomon, and the History of the Founding of the Christian Church as recorded in the New Testament. The last course named will be ready January 1st. Centering in the events recorded in the Book of Acts, it will cover in addition to these the entire New Testament exclusive of the four gospels. It will give to the student as complete and comprehensive a knowledge of the first years of the Christian Church as can be found in the Sacred Writings.

*A new feature of the Institute work this year* will be the publication of a series of pamphlets of interest to Bible students. These will be sold at a nominal price and will be distributed as widely as possible. These publications will be of a character to arouse a wider interest in Bible study. They will represent the thought of leading scholars. They will be more or less popular in their nature. They are intended not for the use of scholars but for the people. The first of this series will be issued very soon. Its title will be "Why Should we Study the Bible?" It is in substance the same as the address upon that subject delivered by Prof. Harper at the convention of the Baptist Young People in Chicago in July. Others will follow at intervals of two or three months. Through these pamphlets many valuable thoughts

upon Biblical topics of current interest will be preserved from the speedy burial which is the fate of lectures and magazine articles.

*The Enrollment of Bible Clubs goes steadily on.* The number has tripled during the past year and it bids fair to triple again before the end of the coming year. If twenty-four hours pass without bringing the report of a new club, the workers at the Headquarters feel like echoing the words of the Emperor Titus who said when during the day he had done no good deed, "My friends, I have lost a day." The great question now is not "How can we bring the young people into these clubs," but "How shall we handle all that come?" The tuition fees, although large enough from the student's standpoint, are entirely inadequate to meet the expenses of the central office. Very little else can be relied upon as a steady source of income, and the Institute therefore finds itself often uncertain where to turn for necessary funds. Many kind friends have come to its rescue in times past, and at other critical moments a welcome mail has brought a small endowment, or a number of tuition fees, to bridge the chasm. It is a missionary work and must go on through *every difficulty*. No thought of abandoning the project has ever been entertained for an instant. As the students increase in number the work will necessarily not increase in so great proportion and it is therefore hoped that the Institution will gradually become more nearly self-supporting. Meantime it is bringing to thousands of people a new knowledge of the Bible.

A few words from several of these students will be of interest and will show their attitude. A Maryland minister writes: "You may quote me as saying that my work with you so far has been the most delightful in its methods and results that I have ever undertaken." A Massachusetts student says: "If I could adequately set forth what I have gained, I might bring in others." A Missionary from Japan sends with his last papers in Hebrew an appreciative message: "I now send in my last two papers in the 'Hebrew Intermediate,' with great satisfaction in the results gained from the pursuit of the course. As all know who try it, Hebrew has a very different and far more interesting aspect when pursued by your method than under that familiar to many at the Theological Seminaries."

*A few words to Special Examiners may not be amiss here.* (1.) More examiners are needed—thousands more. What can you do to secure them for the work? (2.) If you have not formed a group to try the examination in January, now is the time to make another effort. The young people are laying their plans for the winter. They are fresh and strong, and are now ready to undertake what will soon seem to them impossible when they are in the rush of winter engagements. Three months yet remain before the date of the examination,—ample time in which to prepare if the matter is taken up at once. *One* candidate is worth striving for. *One* student this year means *ten* next year. Make one more trial before giving up the plan.